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Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

Note by the Secretary-General*

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/218, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) entitled "Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to the Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21".

* As noted in paragraph 2, the report is delayed in submission as a result of UNEP Governing Council decision SS.VI/3 of 31 May 2000, in which the Security Council requested the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives to review the draft report before its final submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

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Contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/218 of 22 December 1999 on the implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Conference) and the nineteenth special session of the Assembly, in which the Assembly invited the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to consider how UNEP activities were contributing to the implementation thereof, and to submit its views thereon to the Assembly at the earliest opportunity as part of the early substantive preparations for the 2002 review and appraisal of Agenda 21[1] and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21.[2]

2. Subsequently, the Governing Council of UNEP, at its sixth special session, convened in the form of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in Malmö, Sweden, from 29 to 31 May 2000, adopted decision SS VI/3 on 31 May 2000 on the contribution of UNEP to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. As requested by the Governing Council in that decision, the Committee of Permanent Representatives reviewed, on its behalf, the activities of UNEP contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, as contained in a report prepared by the Executive Director. In order to ensure the active contribution of UNEP to the preparatory process for the 2002 review, the Governing Council further requested the Executive Director to submit a final version of the report through the Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

3. In pursuance of the above decisions, the present report outlines the role that UNEP has undertaken in the implementation of Agenda 21 and, within that context, traces the evolution of UNEP's policy framework since the Rio Conference in terms of the intergovernmental decisions and institutional reforms that have served to clarify, refine and strengthen UNEP's role and mandate, restructuring and thus positioning the Programme to catalyse and coordinate the United Nations system's response to the environmental dimension of Agenda 21. The report goes on to present UNEP's major and more recent programme developments contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, particularly with a view to contributing to the 2002 review of the implementation of the outcome of the Rio Conference (see annex). The report further addresses the issue of financing, and concludes by stressing that strong, focused and effective institutional arrangements are needed to ensure a coherent and integrated international environmental policy as an essential component of sustainable development and, in that context, outlines the potential that UNEP has to contribute to preparations for the 10-year review of the outcome of the Rio Conference.

II. The role of UNEP in the implementation of Agenda 21

4. At the Rio Conference, the international community adopted the concept of sustainable development, as enshrined in Agenda 21, as an overarching policy framework within which to address the environmental, social and economic dimensions of development, thereby recognizing environment as an integral issue in the international political agenda. The Rio Conference both reaffirmed UNEP's role as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment and outlined elements that served to further refine its mandate. Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 stipulated that there was a need for an enhanced and strengthened role for UNEP and its Governing Council, and that the Governing Council should, within its mandate, continue to play its role with regard to policy guidance and coordination in the field of the environment, taking into account the development perspective.

5. Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 outlines a series of priority areas on which UNEP should concentrate including:

(a) Strengthening its catalytic role in stimulating and promoting environmental activities and considerations throughout the United Nations system;

(b) Promoting international cooperation in the field of environment and recommending policies to this end;

(c) Developing and promoting the use of natural resource accounting and environmental economics;

(d) Environmental monitoring and assessment;

(e) Strengthening its early warning function;

(f) Coordination and promotion of relevant scientific research with a view to providing a consolidated basis for decision-making;

(g) Dissemination of environmental information and data;

(h) Raising general awareness and action in the area of environmental protection through collaboration with civil society;

(i) Further development of international environmental law, promotion of its implementation, and coordinating functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements;

(j) Further development and promotion of the widest possible use of environmental impact assessments;

(k) Facilitation of information exchange and training on environmentally sound technologies;

(l) Promotion of subregional and regional cooperation and support for environmental protection;

(m) Provision of technical, legal and institutional advice to Governments in establishing and enhancing their national legal and institutional frameworks;

(n) Support to Governments and development agencies and organs in the integration of environmental aspects into their development policies and programmes;

(o) Further developing assessment and assistance in cases of environmental emergencies.

6. In addition to the establishment by the General Assembly of the Commission on Sustainable Development as a high-level functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, at the inter-agency level, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) established the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development to identify major policy issues relating to the follow-up of the Rio Conference and to advise on ways and means of addressing them so as to ensure effective cooperation and coordination with the United Nations system in the implementation of Agenda 21.

7. Through the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, the United Nations established a system of agencies designated as "task managers" for specific issue areas, in order to develop coordinated policy positions and report to the Commission on Sustainable Development. UNEP was designated task manager for toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes, desertification and drought, as well as biodiversity, and joint task manager for atmosphere, oceans and seas, and information for decision-making. In that capacity, UNEP took the lead in preparing issue-specific reports to the Commission in those areas, which were developed through processes of consultation and information exchange between United Nations agencies, international organizations, interested government agencies and a range of other institutions and individuals. Those reports reviewed emerging issues and progress made by the United Nations system in addressing the recommendations of Agenda 21 in those programme areas.

8. UNEP also contributed to reports for which other United Nations partners and/or inter-agency bodies serve as task managers, but where UNEP also played a significant role, including, freshwater, land management, forests, trade, and biotechnology. In addition, UNEP contributed extensively to the reports prepared on the cross-sectoral chapters of Agenda 21, such as consumption and production patterns, human settlements, integrated decision-making, health, major groups, finance, technology, science, education and awareness, capacity-building, institutional arrangements, international legal instruments, information for decision-making, and small island developing States. In all these areas, the progress made by UNEP was brought to the attention of the Commission. Furthermore, UNEP contributed to reports, information documents and initiatives for the

consideration of the Commission relating to major groups or economic sectors, such as industry, tourism, agriculture, transport and energy.

9. Through substantial work in those areas, its successive biennial work programmes, and in view of the emphasis that has been placed by the Commission on Sustainable Development on the environmental dimension of sustainable development, UNEP has made significant contributions to implementing Agenda 21. An overview of these contributions was considered by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session for the five-year review of Agenda 21 in a report that presented an account of the implementation by UNEP of its responsibilities under Agenda 21 (A/S-19/5 and Add.1). Annex I to that report provided a further overview of UNEP's recent sectoral and cross-sectoral activities that had served to contribute to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21.

III. Evolution of the policy framework of UNEP since the Rio Conference

10. Since 1992, a number of intergovernmental decisions dealing with institutional matters, as well as substantial internal reforms, have served to clarify and strengthen UNEP's role and mandate, positioning the Programme to enable it to catalyse and coordinate the United Nations system's response to the environmental dimension of Agenda 21. The Governing Council has adopted a series of important decisions designed to clarify the role of UNEP in deliberations on sustainable development, particularly in the context of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

11. In May 1995, in decision 18/7,[3] the Governing Council emphasized the need for UNEP, in accordance with its mandate and in implementation of Agenda 21, to continue to provide effective support to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, inter alia, through the provision of scientific, technical and policy information and advice on the environment. This was echoed in decision 19/1 of 7 February 1997,[4] by which the Council adopted the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of UNEP,[5] which reaffirmed that UNEP should continue to be the principal United Nations body in the field of the environment, and spelled out the core elements of the focused mandate of the revitalized organization.

12. The Nairobi Declaration was one of the Governing Council's main inputs to the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session held in June 1997. In adopting the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Assembly, inter alia, reaffirmed that the role of UNEP should be further enhanced. It stipulated that UNEP is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

13. The Executive Director, in his first policy statement at the sixth special session of the Governing Council, noted that the session afforded an opportunity to begin to review the adequacy of the institutional arrangements for coherent and integrated international environmental policy formulation, building on the Nairobi Declaration. In that context, he made a series of proposals designed to reorient and revitalize the Programme to focus on a limited number of strategic priority issues that would have the most impact, in terms of both addressing the most pressing environmental issues facing the international community, and strengthening the role of UNEP as a policy forum. The new areas of concentration,[6] as endorsed by the Governing Council, are:

(a) Environmental monitoring, assessment, information and research, including early warning;

(b) Enhanced coordination of environmental conventions and development of environment policy instruments;

(c) Freshwater;

(d) Technology transfer and industry;

(e) Support to Africa.

14. At the twentieth session of the Governing Council, in February 1999, the Executive Director continued to outline his vision for the organization. He noted that the present global context was influenced by globalization, requiring policy options based on functional rather than sectoral approaches. In that context, the Executive Director developed a new organizational structure for UNEP consisting of six

functional divisions each with a priority programme. The divisions are: Environmental Information, Assessment and Early Warning; Environmental Policy Development and Law; Environmental Policy Implementation; Technology, Industry and Economics; Regional Cooperation and Representation; and Environmental Conventions. The integrated organizational structure and UNEP's work programme recognize the need to infuse policy thinking with knowledge from outside the intergovernmental sphere and to build effective partnerships. UNEP has also recognized that a strong regional architecture is central to its ability to manage and advance the larger global environmental agenda and has accordingly enhanced its regional presence.

15. The twentieth session of the Governing Council was also significant in that it was timed to facilitate UNEP's input into the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Governing Council met in early February 1999, prior to the Commission's inter-sessional working groups, to enable UNEP to provide comprehensive support to the Commission, in the form of scientific, technical and policy information, and analysis of and advice on global environmental issues. The Council considered a series of reports and adopted a comprehensive decision — decision 20/19 of 5 February 1999[7] which was for the first time directed specifically at the work of the Commission. That decision allowed the environmental dimension to be fully taken into account in the deliberations. The Governing Council decision detailed its views and recommendations in the areas of oceans and seas, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (A/51/116, annex II), sustainable tourism, changing consumption and production patterns, and small island developing States.

16. The reform and revitalization of UNEP has been both complemented and further enhanced by the recommendations of the Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements that was established by the Secretary-General in 1998, as part of his overall proposals and measures for United Nations reform. The Task Force was charged with preparing proposals on reforming and strengthening United Nations activities in the field of the environment, in order to assist the Secretary-General in making recommendations in this regard to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session. The Task Force, under the chairmanship of the Executive Director of UNEP, reviewed existing structures and arrangements through which environmental activities are carried out within the United Nations system, focusing on the distinctive functions of policy, development of norms and standards, programme development and implementation and financing, as well as relationships among these functions. It evaluated the efficacy of existing structures and arrangements and made recommendations for changes and improvements to optimize the environment work of the United Nations. Most of these far-reaching recommendations were endorsed by the Governing Council in its decision 20/17 of 5 February 1999[8] and by the General Assembly in resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, and are now being implemented.

17. The Task Force observed that the institutional landscape since the Rio Conference has been characterized by the growth in the number of multilateral environmental agreements, as well as the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It affirmed that the Commission and the Governing Council have necessary and distinctive roles, underscoring that the Commission provides a forum for high-level debate that bridges and relates environmental, developmental and socio-economic elements, while the Governing Council is and should remain the primary forum within which ministers and senior officials of Governments can review the environmental performance of the United Nations system as a whole and define priorities for new action. A key recommendation was that an annual ministerial-level global environmental forum should be instituted.

18. The first annual Global Ministerial Environment Forum — the sixth special session of the UNEP Governing Council — was held in Malmö, Sweden, from 29 to 31 May 2000. The Forum provided an opportunity for environment ministers to discuss, review, revise and take action on important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment. It served as a platform for the high-level consideration of priority issues in the environmental agenda, allowing for debate, in-depth discussions, interaction with major groups, and structured efforts to produce innovative strategies and provide the policy guidance needed in the environmental field.

19. The inaugural Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in addition to affording environment ministers the opportunity to contribute to the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, from the environment perspective, initiated the development of a comprehensive environmental contribution into discussions relating to the 10-year review of the Rio Conference, with the aim of providing the views of the Governing Council to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. The environment ministers, who engaged in an extensive dialogue facilitated by keynote speakers from the academic field, industry and civil society, encapsulated their views, inter alia, on the 2002 review of the Rio Conference, and on the major environmental challenges of the twenty-first century, in the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, which the Forum, in its decision SS.VI/1 of 31 May 2000, requested the President of the Governing Council to bring to the attention of the General Assembly. Accordingly, the Declaration was transmitted to the Assembly in document A/54/941, and is also contained in the report of the Governing Council's session, which the Assembly will have before it for its consideration at the fifty-fifth session.

20. The vision expressed by the Governing Council in the Malmö Declaration, has given further guidance to UNEP in its efforts to strengthen its activities contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. The Declaration contains the combined views of Governments, outlining the major environmental challenges of the twenty-first century. Recognizing that the root causes of global environmental degradation are embedded in social and economic problems such as pervasive poverty, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, inequity in distribution of wealth and the debt burden, and that there is an alarming discrepancy between commitments and action, the Governing Council underscored the urgent need for reinvigorated international cooperation based on common concerns and a spirit of international partnership and solidarity. The Malmö Declaration particularly stressed issues that needed to be addressed such as the environmental threats resulting from the accelerating trends of urbanization and the development of mega-cities, the tremendous risk of climate change, the freshwater crisis and its consequences for food security and the environment, the unsustainable exploitation and depletion of biological resources, drought, desertification and uncontrolled deforestation, and increasing environmental emergencies, as well as the risk to human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and land-based sources of pollution.

IV. Major recent programme developments in UNEP

21. In response to the environmental challenges, and in light of its mandate and the evolution of its policy framework, UNEP has taken a number of new initiatives that will be especially relevant in the context of the 2002 review of the implementation of Agenda 21. The initiatives in question are in the areas of: information, monitoring, assessment and early warning; environmental law; coordination of environmental conventions; technology, industry and economics; and the regional dimension.

A. Information, monitoring, assessment and early warning

22. Agenda 21 outlined the need for UNEP to concentrate on environmental monitoring and assessment, strengthen its early warning function, coordinate and promote relevant scientific research with a view to providing a consolidated basis for decision-making, and disseminate environmental information and data. On the basis of the Nairobi Declaration which further underscored the need for UNEP to strengthen these functions, UNEP has developed a comprehensive, forward-looking strategy in this area to enable it to fulfil its mandate to keep under review the state of the environment, building on the technical capacity of a network of centres of excellence in developed and developing countries.

23. UNEP keeps the state of the world's environment under review, highlighting emerging issues through its global and regional state-of-the-environment reports. The second Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process produced the GEO-2000 report, launched in September 1999 to wide acclaim. Accompanying reports to GEO-2000 dealing with the three major regions of small island developing States, namely, the Caribbean, the Western Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, were also released, as was the youth version entitled, *Pachamama: Our Earth, Our Future*. GEO-

2000 provided a compelling assessment of the serious nature of the environmental threats faced by the international community. UNEP has initiated preparations for the third GEO report, which is expected to be completed in 2002 in order to provide a major substantive input into the 10-year review of the implementation of the Rio Conference, providing a definitive assessment of the global environmental situation. The GEO-3 process, which will gather and synthesize the knowledge of more than 850 experts in some 35 scientific institutions around the world, will take a 30-year retrospective and 30-year forward-looking perspective, with a view to reframing the way the international community understands and responds to the environment in the new millennium.

24. UNEP has also been collaborating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the World Resources Institute to prepare a world resources report, which will be published by September 2000. The report will present results of the pilot phase of the millennium ecosystem assessment, which is a major international collaborative effort to map the health of our planet, and an initiative highlighted by the Secretary-General in his report to the Millennium Assembly entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century" (A/54/2000).

25. UNEP is working to expand its network of environmental information and monitoring centres of excellence, for instance, through the formal integration into UNEP of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, and the establishment of the Clearing House under the Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. Possibilities are also being explored to establish centres of excellence in other key environmental areas requiring monitoring and assessment such as land degradation.

26. UNEP's information strategy is also being implemented through a series of sectoral assessments of key environmental issues, such as the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), the Millennium Assessment of the State of the World's Ecosystems, the People, Land Management and Environmental Change Programme, and the Desert Margins Programme. The primary goal of GIWA is to provide Governments, decisions makers and funding agencies with a quantitative, scientifically accurate identification and assessment of water-related issues in various subregions worldwide, in recognition of the central importance that water has assumed in the international agenda. GIWA, which adopts a holistic approach, involving political, economic and social considerations as well as environmental concerns, concentrates on topics of critical importance to the international community, grouped into five major areas of concern: freshwater shortages; pollution; habitat and community modification; unsustainable exploitation of fisheries and other living resources; and global change.

27. In the field of climate change, the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, whose secretariat is provided by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), is scheduled to be completed in 2001. The report will constitute a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the policy-relevant scientific, technical and socio-economic dimensions of climate change. It will concentrate on new findings since the Panel's historic 1995 Second Assessment Report, recognizing that climate change is a global issue, but emphasizing that greater attention needs to be placed on the regional aspects. Once again a synthesis report will be written in a non-technical style appropriate for policy makers and will address a broad range of key policy-relevant questions.

28. UNEP has continued to provide policy makers with early warning and information on emerging issues and environmental threats in order to facilitate policy dialogues on such issues and to promote the development of impact reduction strategies. The UNEP Global Resource Information Database contributes to the development of capacity for early warning of emerging environmental issues and threats. Among the recently developed data sets are those in the areas of population and the terrestrial environment, transboundary resource issues and natural hazards. Additional areas in which data sets are being developed are refugees and the environment, as well as the emerging threat to global freshwater.

29. Activities in that field are carried out with the worldwide network of partners for environmental assessment and information. UNEP's global environmental information exchange network (INFOTERRA) is also being reformed, to ensure better public access to information, thereby enhancing the capacity of the public to participate in environmental decision-making. Part of the INFOTERRA activities are focused on specific subject areas, such as

information exchange on hazardous chemicals through the prior informed consent procedure jointly implemented by UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

B. Environmental law

30. The international community has made significant progress in establishing multilateral environmental agreements in key areas. Since its inception, UNEP has played a pivotal role in supporting the development and implementation of this body of environmental law. Agenda 21 specifically calls on UNEP to concentrate on the "further development of international environmental law, promotion of its implementation, and coordinating functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements". This mandate was reaffirmed in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which stipulated that "the role of UNEP in the further development of international environmental law should be strengthened, including the development of coherent interlinkages among relevant environmental conventions in cooperation with their respective conferences of the parties or governing bodies".

31. In that context, and in pursuance of Governing Council decision 20/3 of 3 February 1999,[9] UNEP is undertaking a process for the preparation of the third 10-year programme for the development and periodic review of environmental law (Montevideo Programme III), in consultation with Governments and relevant organizations. As part of this process, UNEP has convened two meetings of an international group of experts charged with developing components of the programme. The overall objective of the programme will be to increase the effectiveness of environmental law in helping to protect and preserve the global environment and promote sustainable development. For that purpose, UNEP will continue to promote the development, codification and implementation of environmental law at the national, regional and global levels.

32. The Montevideo Programme III will be based on an approach that relies on the contributions and perspectives of different disciplines and techniques and implementation will take into account the driving forces of environmental change, such as poverty, globalization and trade liberalization. Such an approach will enable the programme to address environmental issues within a framework that takes advantage of linkages among scientific, economic and other policy perspectives in developing legal and institutional responses. It will also assist UNEP in its efforts to increase the integration of the environmental dimension of sustainable development into the programmes of the United Nations system, and to make the most effective use of the contributions from organizations, institutions and groups outside the United Nations, which can act as partners in the task of developing and implementing environmental law.

33. The proposed components of the Montevideo Programme III, as developed by the expert group, identify priorities for action in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In this regard, it is hoped that both the twenty-first session of the UNEP Governing Council and the 10-year review of the implementation of the Rio Conference will provide an opportunity for concrete action on a number of high-priority components, including those relating to implementation, capacity-building, and prevention and mitigation of, and compensation and other redress for, environmental damage. It is also recognized that the pace of environmental change continues to increase, requiring UNEP and others active in the field of environmental law to respond quickly and effectively in developing responses to new and emerging issues. By periodically reviewing the state of environmental law, UNEP will continue to be able to respond effectively to new challenges and opportunities. Part of the review process should consider emerging issues that may effectively be addressed through the development and strengthening of environmental law. In this regard, a number of issues were discussed by the group where action to develop legal responses may be necessary in the future. Such issues include changes in the nitrogen cycle, endocrine disrupters, biologically active pharmaceuticals in drinking water, environmental refugees and invasive alien species. The Montevideo Programme III will be considered and finalized by a Meeting of Senior Government Officials Expert in Environmental Law — an open-ended intergovernmental meeting to be convened by UNEP in Nairobi in October 2000 — the outcome of which will be submitted for adoption to the Governing Council at its twenty-first session.

34. Steady progress has also been made in the implementation and further advancement of existing

environmental conventions, as well as in the development and negotiation of new ones. Significant progress has been made under the Convention on Biological Diversity,[10] with the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Protocol, which is the first global treaty that reaffirms, incorporates and operationalizes the precautionary principle enunciated in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[11] outlines procedures to deal with issues arising from the transboundary movement, transit, handling and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) — and commodities containing them — that may adversely affect the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or pose risks to human health and the environment.

35. Significant headway has been made in the global chemicals agenda, with the adoption of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which was opened for signature in September 1998. Solid progress has also been made in four negotiating rounds, under the auspices of UNEP, towards a global treaty, to reduce and eliminate the use of certain persistent organic pollutants. Agreement is expected to be reached within the deadline embodied in the UNEP Governing Council mandate issued in 1997, at the last round of negotiations, scheduled to be held in South Africa in December 2000. In the field of hazardous waste management, the Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was adopted in December 1999, at the tenth anniversary meeting of the treaty's Parties. The Protocol, the result of negotiations began in 1993, established rules on liability and compensation to address the damage caused by accidental spills of hazardous waste during export or import.

36. The implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities has also been significantly enhanced, with the preparation of regional programmes of action, the identification of sewage as a major land-based source of pollution, the implementation of the GEF-funded GIWA, the establishment of a clearing house (www.gpa.unep.org), and the development of a strategic action plan on municipal waste water in close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council. Plans are also under way for the first intergovernmental review of the Global Programme of Action in 2001.

C. Environmental convention coordination

37. In addition to the further development of international environmental law and the promotion of its implementation, Agenda 21 identified the need for UNEP to concentrate on "coordinating functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements". This was reaffirmed in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which referred to UNEP's role in the development of coherent interlinkages among environmental conventions in cooperation with their respective conferences of the parties or governing bodies. UNEP has been working to enhance coherence and complementarities between environmental and environment-related institutional arrangements, and is putting increased emphasis on facilitating collaboration and identifying synergies among conventions, utilizing the capabilities of the entire Programme to contribute to the objectives agreed under the various global and regional conventions and action plans.

38. In cooperation with the governing bodies of the environmental and environment-related conventions, UNEP has undertaken a series of initiatives to develop coherent interlinkages among the conventions and promote their effective implementation. In this regard, the General Assembly has had before it a series of reports addressing the need to enhance complementarities between international instruments related to environment and sustainable development (A/53/477 and A/54/468). The Assembly will have before it at its fifty-fifth session, a report prepared in pursuance of resolution 53/186 of 15 December 1998 on "International institutional arrangements related to environment and sustainable development". The report outlines the considerable progress that has been made in this field, through the initiatives that have been undertaken by UNEP, the convention secretariats and other partners in the United Nations system, as well as areas for further cooperation.

39. In addition to its work at the international level, UNEP has accorded the highest priority to the revitalization of the regional seas conventions and

action plans, building stronger bridges between these and related international environmental agreements. Substantial progress has been made in: promoting and facilitating horizontal cooperation; integrating their work into the implementation, development and use of GIWA; strengthening their capacity in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action; identifying priority areas in their work programmes, particularly those in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean — which require programmatic support from UNEP; and strengthening their information management capacities including improved exchange of information among and with global environmental conventions and related international agreements.

D. Regional and subregional cooperation

40. Agenda 21 outlined the need for UNEP to concentrate on the promotion of subregional and regional cooperation and support for environmental protection. UNEP has strengthened its activities in the regions, in particular through its regional offices and other existing cooperative regional and subregional institutional frameworks. UNEP's regional offices are involved as facilitators and enhancers of cooperation, not only with Governments and national and subnational institutions, but also with relevant international, intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions and civil society, disseminating information, advice and training, and providing forums for consultation and consensus-building. Regional activities include the assessment of the environment in the regions; the promotion of regional policy dialogues on emerging environmental issues; catalysing region-wide environmental actions by supporting the existing regional institutional frameworks or regional environmental conventions; and capacity-building activities for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

41. Within one of its core areas of concentration — support to Africa — UNEP has undertaken a series of initiatives within the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, for the development of policy support and capacity-building for international negotiations, inter alia, through the revitalization of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), as the main African policy forum in the field of the environment. UNEP hosted expert and ministerial-level consultations to facilitate the development of a common African position for the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I), the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II), and the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF).

42. UNEP also supports other regional environmental ministerial frameworks, namely, the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean; the Asia and the Pacific Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development; and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). UNEP also works closely with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in the Environment for Europe process and with the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment.

E. Technology, industry and economics

43. UNEP focuses on raising awareness, improving the transfer of information, building capacity, fostering technology cooperation, partnerships and transfer, improving understanding of the environmental impacts of trade issues, promoting the integration of environmental considerations into economic policies, and catalysing global chemical safety activities in the field of technology.

44. UNEP has moved to strengthen its activities with regard to improving countries' understanding of the interlinkages and complementarities between environment, trade and development issues. It is focusing on four integrated and complementary activities, namely, research in the environment-trade domain, and on practical approaches to integrating these policies to achieve sustainable development, capacity-building to develop mutually supportive environment and trade policies, including through the recent establishment of a task force with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); consensus-building through awareness-raising, consultations and dialogue to seek out areas of shared perception and approach among major

stakeholders; and building partnerships to promote synergies and complementarities with other organizations working in the trade and environment domain.

45. At the 1999 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the Secretary-General asked business to play its part by demonstrating good global citizenship wherever it operates. He proposed a "Global Compact" that addresses three areas of shared international agreement: human rights, labour standards and environmental protection. He called on businesses to support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; to undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and to encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies. UNEP has worked to develop the environment components of the Global Compact, building on its long-standing relationship with the private sector.

F. Financing

46. With the increasing number of international instruments concerned with the environment, it is important to underscore that the financial resources available to support international and national actions for the environment and sustainable development continue to fall far short of what is required. As the Nairobi Declaration stated, in order to operationalize its mandate, UNEP needs "adequate, stable and predictable financial resources". This has been reiterated by the international community in a series of General Assembly resolutions, as well as in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. While the volume of resources available to the Environment Fund has fluctuated widely in the period since the Rio Conference, it is anticipated that the 2000-2001 work programme, authorized at $120 million for the biennium, will secure full funding, reflecting the growing political confidence in the organization. This has occurred at a time of intense competition for resources for environment-related activities concurrent with the development of several major international environment treaties and their associated financial mechanisms. Nevertheless, the sentiments expressed in the Nairobi Declaration still remain to be realized.

47. During this period, one area of substantial progress was the establishment and subsequent successful replenishing of GEF, implemented by UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank. GEF promotes international cooperation and finance actions to address, within the framework of sustainable development, the loss of biological diversity, changes in climate from increasing greenhouse gas emissions, the pollution of waters that cross national boundaries, the depletion of the ozone layer and land degradation. As an equal implementing partner, UNEP carries out environmental assessments and analyses and provides scientific advice in shaping GEF priorities and programmes, particularly through the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel. In the past year, GEF's UNEP-funded projects reached a total of $175 million, with major initiatives such as GIWA, the regionally-based assessment of persistent toxic substances, and a facility for developing solar and wind resource assessments added to the portfolio. The year 2000 has also seen the start of the full-scale Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and increased actions in support of the Special Initiative on Africa on land and water.

48. The Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, established in 1990, continues its assistance to developing country Parties, with contributions that reached over $1 billion at the end of March 2000 for activities and projects in 121 developing countries. In addition, the modalities for financing activities under the future treaty on persistent organic pollutants are still under discussion.

49. Financial mechanisms for multilateral environmental agreements remain a difficult issue in negotiation processes, particularly in view of the fact that resources have consistently fallen short of what is required, as has been the case for the implementation of Agenda 21. Alongside the substantial success in financing achieved through GEF for specific areas, financial constraints, in general, remain a major impediment to meeting the urgent requirements of the international environmental agenda.

G. Conclusion

50. As was outlined by UNEP's Governing Council in the Malmö Declaration, the dawn of the twenty-first century marks a defining moment in the efforts of the international community to ensure that the growing trends of environmental degradation that threaten the sustainability of the planet are arrested and reversed.

The declaration underscores the urgent need for reinvigorated international cooperation based on common concerns and a spirit of international partnership and solidarity.

51. Despite considerable progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, it has become increasingly clear to the international community with the emergence of new evidence of the serious nature of global environmental threats, that the scale of current environmental and sustainable development problems requires the mobilization of political will, financial and technical resources supported by strong and focused institutions that go beyond what is currently available.

52. The institutional landscape in this field since the Rio Conference has been characterized by the growth in the number of international instruments concerned with the environment and sustainable development. While the successful establishment of various multilateral environmental agreements represents an impressive record of achievement by the international community, it also highlights the issue of the need for continuing policy coherence among the various instruments that exist in the field of the environment, in particular for complementarity, coherence and synergy in their implementation. In order to effectively adapt and respond to these new realities, UNEP, guided by the decisions of its Governing Council and the General Assembly, including Assembly resolution 53/242 on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements, has undertaken a substantial restructuring, which has helped position it to fulfil its mandate to catalyse and coordinate the United Nations system's response to the environmental dimension of Agenda 21. It has emerged from this restructuring with a focused, integrated and functional programme of work as well as with an organizational structure.

53. There is also a clear and recognized need for more coherent, multidisciplinary approaches to specific environmental issues. To address linkages and gaps, as recommended by the Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements, and endorsed by the Governing Council, General Assembly and subsequently ACC, UNEP is establishing an Environmental Management Group, as a problem-solving, results-oriented mechanism to foster coordinated action on specific environmental issues. It is envisaged that one of the major goals of the Group will be to achieve effective coordination and joint action. Another objective of the Group is to facilitate the work of UNEP in carrying out its responsibilities as task manager. Such evolving arrangements will allow the United Nations system to provide a flexible, collaborative and participatory mechanism to support the implementation of Agenda 21 and coordination of various environment-related activities, as well as respond in a timely manner to emerging issues, thereby leading to a more effective use of resources and expertise.

54. As mentioned above, UNEP is also working to enhance coherence and complementarities between environmental and environment-related institutional arrangements, and is putting increased emphasis on facilitating collaboration and identifying synergies among environmental conventions, utilizing the capabilities of the entire Programme to contribute to the objectives agreed under the various global and regional conventions and action plans. In this regard, the General Assembly has addressed that issue in its deliberations over the last three years in reviewing "international institutional arrangements related to environment and sustainable development" and has before it at its current session, a report outlining progress in that regard, prepared in pursuance of resolution 53/186 of 15 December 1999.

55. In considering the institutional arrangements within the United Nations system for dealing with the challenges of the environment, and the role of UNEP in that context, it is clear that the Programme has a distinct role with respect to providing scientific, technical and policy information and advice on the environment. Its policy development, normative and analytical role is essential to giving further impetus to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. In response to General Assembly resolution 54/218 of 22 December 1999, UNEP has commenced its internal consideration of its contribution to the 2002 review of the implementation of the outcome of the Rio Conference. The present report represents the initial consideration of the UNEP Governing Council to this process. In undertaking this exercise, the Governing Council of UNEP takes particular note of the Malmö Declaration, adopted by the first meeting of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, on 31 May 2000, as well as the views contained therein on the major challenges of the twenty-first century and considers and makes recommendations on engaging the private

sector and civil society in responding to those challenges.

56. As emphasized by the Secretary-General in his report to the Millennium Assembly entitled "We the peoples: The role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century", the immensity of the environmental challenges facing the international community requires urgent solutions and international cooperation on a scale necessary to make sustainable development a reality. In order to considerably enhance UNEP's ability to meet such challenges, the Environment Programme has been significantly revitalized and reformed, taking into account the sweeping changes that have affected the international political and economic context over the last decade. On the basis of this extensive institutional reform and armed with the considerable gains witnessed in scientific and technological areas, UNEP and its Governing Council can provide far-reaching and insightful contributions to the preparatory process leading to the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the Rio Conference, helping to revitalize the political will and momentum, in the spirit of partnership and cooperation encapsulated in that Conference.

57. In this regard, the ministers of the environment and high officials, stressing that the 2002 review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 would provide a further opportunity for the international community to take action to implement its commitments and strengthen the international cooperation so urgently required to address the challenges of sustainable development in the twenty-first century, expressed their views on the 2002 review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development by stating:

> "The 2002 review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should be undertaken by an international conference at the summit level. The objective should not be to renegotiate Agenda 21, which remains valid, but to inject a new spirit of cooperation and urgency based on agreed actions in the common quest for sustainable development. In this regard, the ratification of all environmental conventions and protocols, in particular those related to climate, desertification, biosafety and chemicals, should be urgently pursued by Governments.
>
> "Governments and UNEP have to play a major role in the preparation for the 2002 review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at the regional and global levels and ensure that the environmental dimension of sustainable development is fully considered on the basis of a broad assessment of the state of the global environment. The preparations for the conference should be accelerated.
>
> "The 2002 conference should aim at addressing the major challenges to sustainable development, and in particular the pervasive effects of the burden of poverty on a large proportion of the Earth's inhabitants, counterposed against excessive and wasteful consumption and inefficient resource use that perpetuate the vicious circle of environmental degradation and increasing poverty.
>
> "The 2002 conference should review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance based on an assessment of future needs for an institutional architecture that has the capacity to effectively address wide-ranging environmental threats in a globalizing world. UNEP's role in this regard should be strengthened and its financial base broadened and made more predictable."

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/50/25), chap. IV, annex.

[4] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), chap. IV, annex.

[5] Ibid., decision 19/1, annex.

[6] Ibid., *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/53/25), annex I, decision SS.V/2.

[7] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/54/25 and Add.1), chap. IV, annex.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[11] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

Annex

Overview of activities of the United Nations Environment Programme contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

1. The activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) contribute to the implementation of Agenda 21 through its core functions as outlined in the present report. Its activities in the field of environmental assessment, information and early warning, including tasks related to environmental disasters, provide a basis for actions under all chapters of Agenda 21 through the provision of information for decision makers. Other functions of UNEP relate to various aspects of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues identified in Agenda 21. Overall, the activities of UNEP in support of the implementation of Agenda 21 cover its multiple chapters, with recognition of complexities of environmental issues that require cross-sectoral approaches. The information given below indicates the main chapters to which UNEP contributes, and does not necessarily refer to the entire range of related chapters. Highlights of recent relevant activities are presented hereafter.

I. Information for decision-making

2. In undertaking its information, monitoring and assessment functions, as outlined in the main body of the present report, UNEP continues to build the scientific knowledge basis for environmental actions and decision-making by all actors to implement Agenda 21. These tasks are carried out at national and global levels by supporting networking, coordination and institution-building of key centres to improve information management and national and regional environmental assessments. The key centres will be incorporated into the global state-of-the-environment processes. By promoting improved communication and networking technologies, UNEP facilitates the access by Governments, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to unique sources of data and information. UNEP also catalyses and makes use of targeted scientific research towards improved environmental information management in decision-making.

3. UNEP has also strengthened its environmental expertise to further improve its participation in the coordinated responses of the United Nations system to disasters caused by natural phenomena, natural phenomena coupled with the effects of human activities, and man-made disasters. It has been developing core response services and capacities, including brokerage and clearing-house functions, establishing a global network of officially designated national focal points, improving the standard notification/request form for assistance, and finalizing *Practical Considerations for Developing National Environmental Emergency Response Mechanisms*. There has been a considerable increase in requests for assistance. UNEP has provided or facilitated different types of assistance, depending on the specific situations and national requests as follows:

(a) Assessment, through a joint UNEP/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) Balkans Task Force, of the impacts on the environment and human settlements from the conflict in the Balkans since May 1999, which was presented in a report entitled *The Kosovo Conflict, Consequences for the Environment and Human Settlements*, published in September 1999. Since February 2000, a group of international experts has been conducting four-month feasibility studies on specific activities and technical requirements on the identified four "hot spots";

(b) Evaluation, throughout 1999, of the environmental impacts of the floods of the Yangtze River in China that occurred in 1998 and their contributing factors, as well as identification and building of capacity for flood mitigation and management measures;

(c) Assessments of the environmental impacts of the spill of liquid and suspended waste containing cyanide and heavy metals from a gold mine in Romania. Assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), Hungary and Romania from 26 February to 5 March 2000 resulted in recommendations on response activities, better accident prevention and preparedness and possible international assistance;

(d) Assessment of the implications that the December 1999 earthquakes in Turkey have for the environment and human settlements;

(e) Assessment of the impact that the March/April 2000 floods in Mozambique have on the environment and human settlements in the country, resulting in recommendations on measures for mitigation and preparedness for future floods as well as seven project proposals for short-term rehabilitation, and for medium-term and long-term mitigation and preparedness;

(f) Collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to carry out a preliminary socio-economic environmental assessment of the damage caused by floods and landslides in Venezuela, which occurred in December 1999.

4. In the UNEP programme on awareness and preparedness for emergencies at local level, which aims at promoting the prevention of industrial accidents and preparation of emergency response plans, the following activities have been carried out: launching of the programme in Africa and its introduction at cleaner production seminars in Bahrain, China and Tunisia; strengthening network links in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Madagascar, Thailand and Turkey; signing of a formal agreement with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre in Bangkok; and holding a special seminar in London on the potential contribution of the insurance industry to improving safety at mine sites.

II. Sectoral issues

A. Conservation and management of resources for development

5. The sectoral issues covered by section II of Agenda 21, entitled "Conservation and management of resources for development", are of direct relevance to the activities of UNEP, where UNEP contributes to the implementation of Agenda 21 through its regular programme of work. Recently, UNEP's contribution has been particularly significant in the field of water, covering both oceans and seas and freshwater, and in the field of chemicals.

B. Atmosphere

6. In support of the implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, UNEP provided targeted information as part of its mandate to act as an information clearing house for the Protocol. That included operating eight regional networks of officers handling ozone-depleting substances (two in Africa, two in Latin America, one in the Caribbean, one in South Asia, one in South-East Asia and the Pacific, one in West Asia) who organize regional training workshops on the establishment and enforcement of import and export licensing systems for such substances; conducting country programmes and institution-strengthening projects, thus supporting countries for the successful undertaking of national phase-out activities and implementation of their country programmes; assisting 85 low-volume-consuming countries in the preparation and implementation of their country programmes; assisting low-volume-consuming countries in phasing out the use of ozone-depleting substances in refrigeration, in cooperation with UNDP, Canada, Finland, France, Germany and Japan; helping 15 countries to formulate and 45 countries to implement refrigerant management plans; and, with support from GEF, assisting 20 countries with economies in transition in their efforts to comply with the tracking and licensing provisions of the Montreal Protocol and prevent illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances. The same approach is taken in country programmes and institution-strengthening projects. In addition, 11 training projects have been developed that include special training for customs officers and technicians. In Africa, national ozone units in 40 countries have been linked through two regional networks to facilitate implementation of the Montreal Protocol. These units met twice in 1999 to share their experience and promote regional cooperation, and are also supported by the Multilateral Fund in implementing institution-strengthening projects.

7. Under the Multilateral Fund for Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, UNEP assisted developing countries in 1999 in complying with the provisions of the Protocol. Activities included the release of the OzonAction Strategic Information System (OASIS), four more country programmes (bringing the total to 80), four more institution-strengthening projects (bringing the total to 75) and policy training projects for methyl bromide and monitoring of ozone-depleting

substances. The 1999 work programme totalled $10.5 million, consisting of $7 million from the Multilateral Fund, $1.5 million from bilateral assistance and $2 million from GEF.

8. UNEP has provided legal assistance to the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the development of a regional legal framework on transboundary air pollution, especially from haze and forest fires. In August 1999, UNEP, in collaboration with the ASEAN secretariat, prepared the terms of reference of a feasibility study for a single ASEAN agreement on transboundary haze pollution. The document was presented to and endorsed by the fourteenth meeting of the Haze Technical Task Force and the eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Haze.

C. Forests

9. During 1999, as the lead agency within the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests, UNEP continued to facilitate the implementation of proposals of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). It assisted and co-sponsored various government-led initiatives in support of the programme of work of IPF and IFF, including: a joint non-governmental organizations/ Costa Rica Global Workshop on Underlying Causes of Deforestation (San José, Costa Rica, January 1999); an International Expert Meeting on Forest Protected Areas, co-sponsored by the Governments of Brazil and the United States of America (Puerto Rico, March 1999); and an International Expert Meeting on the Needs and Requirements of Countries with Low Forest Cover, co-sponsored by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Tehran, October 1999). Support to the secretariat of the IPF/IFF continued through the secondment of a senior staff member. UNEP participated actively in the fourth session of IFF (January/February 2000). Furthermore, a UNEP position paper on forest-related issues was prepared in March 2000 and is currently under review within the UNEP secretariat.

10. UNEP, in cooperation with partner agencies, also supported two training workshops held in Benin and Kenya, on the conservation and use of forest genetic resources, at which a total of about 45 participants were trained. UNEP is also helping partner agencies to undertake a study to develop appropriate strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of forest genetic resources in sub-Saharan Africa.

D. Desertification and drought

11. During the past years, UNEP has fostered an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources, in which social and economic considerations unite in mutual support. It has promoted and supported research on dryland resource systems and practices for their sustainable development and management. The UNEP database on desertification was updated and a second edition of the *World Atlas of Desertification* was produced. UNEP has collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Bank to prepare a handbook on indicators of quality and sustainability of land resources. UNEP also promoted the transfer of techniques and technologies and fostered training. Six regional training courses and workshops were organized for middle-level and high-level decision makers to address issues such as the management of dryland resources, sustainable food production, monitoring and assessment of desertification, expansion of new technologies and the provision of public information. UNEP also issued various publications, including, *Special Aspects of Sustainable Dryland Management*, *Directory of Arid Lands Research Institutions*, *Social Dimensions of Desertification*, *An Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review*, *Sustainability Indicators*, and *Interaction of Desertification and Climate*, and 11 issues of the *Desertification Control Bulletin*.

12. UNEP, as part of a global initiative, supported activities in eight southern African countries to compile and evaluate soil and water conservation practices and to disseminate information on sustainable soil and water conservation systems to countries with similar environments. Assessment of the status of human-induced soil degradation was completed in 15 countries in South and South-East Asia. An assessment of the linkages between desertification and both biological diversity and climate change was carried out.

13. UNEP, continues to promote, as the centre pillar of its strategy for desertification control, actions in support of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in

Africa. UNEP actions to this end include assistance in developing national, subregional and regional action programmes for implementation of the Convention, improving policy-relevant assessment of dryland degradation, increasing global awareness of dryland and desertification control issues, promoting people-oriented approaches to sustainable land use and natural resource management, and assessment in preparing projects for submission for GEF financing. The Success Stories and Saving the Drylands Awards programme has been launched to help raise awareness and promote the exchange of information on replicable best practices in sustainable land-use and management and community participation.

14. As mentioned in the main body of the present report, UNEP organized the African Regional Preparatory Conference for the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification, in Nairobi from 27 September to 1 October 1999. The meeting reviewed the implementation of the Convention in affected African countries, as well as experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of national action programmes, environmental policies and strategies.

15. UNEP has embarked on a review and analysis of sustainable land use, including soil management. In the unfolding review process, particular attention is being accorded to the interconnections and interlinkages between and among the respective UNEP policy elements relating to land, water, climate, biodiversity, industry, chemicals and technology, and to legal, economic and other instruments. Consultations with Governments, other partners and stakeholders will be continued during the year 2000.

E. Biological diversity and biotechnology

16. UNEP provided substantive support to the Conference of the Parties to, and the secretariat of, the Convention on Biological Diversity in the development of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (adopted in Montreal in January 2000). During the negotiating process, UNEP, as part of its activities to support Africa, organized the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Consultations on Biosafety Negotiations in Nairobi in January and August 1999.

17. The UNEP/GEF pilot Biosafety Enabling Activity project has been implemented at the national level for the preparation of national biosafety frameworks, using the UNEP International Technical Guidelines for Safety in Biotechnology as a guide. A total of 18 countries were supported (Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Egypt, Hungary, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Pakistan, Poland, the Russian Federation, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia). In addition, eight regional workshops on biosafety were organized in the following regions: Africa (Nairobi), Asia/Pacific (New Delhi), Central/Eastern Europe (Bled, Slovenia), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana). The workshops covered capacity-building requirements to enhance safety in biotechnology in respect of issues related to risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms, including their environmental impact assessment, and addressed issues related to the transboundary transfers of living modified organisms, including appropriate mechanisms and modalities for the supply and exchange of information.

18. UNEP also supported training workshops in collaboration with a number of microbial resources centres, particularly in Brazil, China and Egypt. Emphasis was placed on training of diverse groups of about 150 participants that included scientists, technical experts, policy makers and others in related fields. The training workshops addressed emerging issues in the field of microbial genetic resources. UNEP collaborated with FAO to train 15 scientists from the Association of Agricultural Researchers in East and Central African countries in technical aspects of animal genetic conservation, and with the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) to train about 55 participants who were trained in various aspects of plant genetic resources conservation and use in countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

19. Furthermore, as part of its ongoing activities to promote synergy among the biological-diversity-related conventions, in early 2000, UNEP published a handbook: *Implementation of Conventions Related to Biological Diversity in Africa*, which will be a useful tool for promoting the harmonized implementation of relevant environmental conventions.

F. Oceans and seas

20. As mentioned earlier, UNEP has accorded the highest priority to the revitalization of the regional seas

programme. In order to promote collaboration among regional seas conventions and action plans, UNEP convened and provided substantive inputs to the Second Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, held in The Hague in July 1999, attended by representatives from the secretariats of 14 regional seas conventions and action plans, as well as seven global conventions and related international agreements. As a follow-up to the meeting in The Hague, strategic programme support was provided by UNEP to the work plans of several regional seas conventions and action plans, particularly in areas such as the Global Programme of Action, the International Coral Reef Initiative and integrated coastal area management, which all interface with the priorities of UNEP's programme of work.

21. UNEP provided assistance to the parties to the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the East African Region (Nairobi Convention) in convening the Second Meeting of the Parties in Port Louis, in November 1999, and to the parties to the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention) in convening the fifth meeting of the Parties in Accra, in March 2000, thereby assisting the parties in their efforts to undertake urgent measures required to revitalize the conventions. In this regard, UNEP prepared a strategy paper entitled "Vitalization of the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions: proposals, including elements for a new programme", and presented it to the above meetings. UNEP is in the process of establishing at UNEP headquarters the Joint Umbrella Mechanism of the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions which is expected to be operational by the middle of 2000. In addition, UNEP is actively supporting twinning (horizontal cooperation) between the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) and the Abidjan Convention, and between the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area and the Nairobi Convention. The twinning arrangement between the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission and the UNEP Regional Seas Programme for East Africa was signed at the Global Ministerial Environment Forum/sixth special session of the Governing Council of UNEP, in May 2000.

22. UNEP continued to support various Governments in the further development of regional seas conventions and action plans, including the following:

(a) The Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities to the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (adopted in Oranjestad, Aruba, October 1999);

(b) A draft convention and draft action plan for the North-East Pacific, which will be presented to a meeting of high-level government-designated experts to be hosted by the Government of Panama in September 2000;

(c) The procedures for the establishment of a regional coordinating unit for the North-West Pacific region, in support of the signatory States of the North-West Pacific Action Plan, which was adopted in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in March 2000, at the fifth of a series of intergovernmental meetings.

23. Through the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, UNEP further contributed to achieving the objectives of the regional seas conventions and related action plans as well as relevant global conventions, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[a] As was outlined in the main body of the present report, the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action, which was fully established and staffed in The Hague in August 1999, has achieved substantial progress in enhancing the implementation of the Programme of Action. UNEP concluded the first phase of the establishment of a clearing house, including the launching of the central node in September 1999 and development of other nodes focusing on pollutant source categories, in cooperation with the lead agencies, namely the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Also under the programme, UNEP finalized and initiated a strategic Global Programme of Action for municipal waste water. A major component of this action plan is a recommended framework for decision-making that is being developed as a guide for local and national decision makers and professionals, on appropriate and environmentally sound waste-water management systems. UNEP has been exploring the feasibility of convening a series of regionally based meetings on

strategic action plans as a response to a global conference to address sewage as a major land-based source of pollution affecting human and ecosystem health. UNEP has also initiated preparations for the First Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action in 2001, by conducting an expert group meeting in The Hague in April 2000, as requested by the Governing Council in its decision 20/19 B.

24. Regarding assessment, UNEP finalized 10 regional assessments on land-based activities drawing on a series of regional technical workshops convened in the framework of its regional seas programmes and, in cooperation with United Nations agencies, finalized two assessment reports by the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection: "A sea of troubles: issues in focus" and "Land-based sources and activities affecting the quality and uses of the marine, coastal and associated freshwater environment".

25. Assistance was also provided to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to prepare national action programmes on land-based activities. A regional programme of action on land-based activities is being prepared for the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in cooperation with the Regional Organization for Conservation of the Marine Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Cooperation was also strengthened with various private sector industries of relevance to the goals of the Global Programme of Action.

G. Freshwater

26. Freshwater is one of the most critical environmental issues facing the planet at the start of the twenty-first century, as identified in a number of forums and publications, including UNEP's Global Environment Outlook reports. At its twentieth session, the Governing Council agreed that UNEP should play a vital role in addressing freshwater issues. Building on the Nairobi Declaration on the role and mandate of UNEP and other Governing Council decisions, the new UNEP water policy and strategy set goals that cut across sectoral and administrative boundaries, and will make a significant contribution to finding appropriate solutions for these problems, inter alia, through:

(a) Filling the information and knowledge gap on critical freshwater issues, especially through Global Environment Outlook reports and activities forming part of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA);

(b) Providing or supporting forums for intergovernmental policy dialogue on issues relating to the environmental aspects of freshwater;

(c) Reviewing policy responses to existing and emerging issues;

(d) Promoting the use of integrated policy measures and instruments in tackling the root causes of major freshwater concerns;

(e) Stimulating cooperative actions to respond to the increasing challenges to freshwater management;

(f) Strengthening consultations, coordination and networking with various stakeholders.

27. UNEP's collaboration with the other GEF implementing agencies involved in international waters projects was significantly strengthened. A total of 55 international waters projects are under implementation or preparation with GEF funding as a result of requests from over 130 countries. In coverage, they range from river basins such as the Danube, Mekong and Okavango river basins, the Senegal river basin, the Volta river basin and the Upper Paraguay River, to shared lake basins such as the Malawi lake basin, the Ohrid lake basin, the Titicaca lake basin and the Victoria lake basin. These global efforts have enhanced cooperation between and among the GEF implementing agencies.

28. Against a background of rapid industrialization and population growth, UNEP is participating in the ongoing global debate on the management of groundwater, on international aquifers, on water and small island States, on water and dams, on desalination of water, and on water for mega-cities as well as on water demand management challenges. The question of public and private sector partnership continues to be a matter of increasing debate in the water and sanitation sector worldwide. In that regard, UNEP is participating in the discussions within the World Water Council. A working group is considering the feasibility of setting up a world water fund.

29. With regard to river basin management, UNEP, in cooperation with the regional activity centre of the

Mediterranean Action Plan, developed and published a *Conceptual Framework and Planning Guidelines for Integrated River Basin and Coastal Area Management*. It provides information on how to benefit from combining management efforts between coastal areas and river basins, and presents procedures on how management activities can be initiated under this concept. A demonstration project has been implemented in the Cetina River basin and associated coastal areas (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia), including the preparation of an environmental and socio-economic profile of the area.

30. UNEP has also continued to implement a shared basin management project at Lake Xingkai/Khanka (China/Russian Federation border), partly funded by the Government of Japan, primarily for the conservation of habitat for migratory birds and wetlands protection through assessment and diagnostic studies on major environmental issues and threats. The report of the outcome of this project is being finalized.

31. UNEP is also continuing to undertake a Managing Water for African Cities project with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The project has two components: water demand management, and mitigating effects of urbanization on water resources and aquatic systems. Strategies for managing groundwater resources will be prepared for Addis Ababa and Lusaka, and a river basin management strategy will be prepared for the Juskei and Klip rivers for Johannesburg.

H. Chemicals

32. UNEP continued to play a leading role in supporting chemicals-assessment-related activities as well as chemicals management issues, in partnership with Governments and United Nations bodies and agencies and other organizations. As mentioned in the main body of the present report, in pursuance of chapter 19 of Agenda 21, and under the auspices of UNEP and FAO, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade was adopted in Rotterdam in September 1998, two years earlier than the target set out in chapter 19. UNEP, together with FAO, provides the interim secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention. The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for the Application of the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade held its sixth session in Rome in July 1999, and took decisions, inter alia, on interim arrangements. In February 2000, the Interim Chemicals Review Committee, established by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee held its first session in Geneva. UNEP continued to implement the prior informed consent procedure jointly with FAO.

33. As mentioned in the main body of the present report, UNEP continues to assist Governments in the development of a global legally binding instrument on persistent organic pollutants through an intergovernmental negotiating committee which held its third session in Geneva in September 1999, and its fourth session in Bonn in March 2000. At the fourth round of negotiations, extensive discussions laid the basis for deciding on technical and financial assistance at the final round of negotiations, due to be held in Johannesburg in December 2000. Experience with financial mechanisms under other conventions and protocols are important issues in these deliberations.

34. In 1998, a number of actions were initiated and carried out to promote and facilitate information development and exchange on persistent organic pollutants and their management. A worldwide network of national experts designated as focal points for such pollutants has been established. A database with information on alternatives has also been developed and made accessible via the UNEP home page on persistent organic pollutants.

35. In 1999, UNEP developed the first inventory of worldwide capacity for the destruction and disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). It gives Governments and others responsible for managing PCB wastes a valuable guide for identifying facilities in all parts of the world. A UNEP report on dioxin and furan inventories was also issued in 1999. To assist countries and regions in dealing with health and environmental effects from releases and emissions of persistent organic pollutants that might vary by region, UNEP in the first half of 2000 started to implement a project entitled "Regionally based assessment of persistent toxic substances", with funding from GEF. This project will contribute to GEF priority-setting and serve to guide international action to protect human health and the environment from persistent toxic substances.

36. UNEP is conducting more than 50 regional and subregional workshops on capacity-building in 2000-2001 to promote the environmentally sound management of chemicals, in particular certain persistent organic pollutants, with substantial financial support from the United States. Work has been under way to establish Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers in Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

37. Furthermore, WHO and UNEP have joined forces to protect both human health and the environment by promoting strategies to combat malaria with reduced reliance on dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT). An important first step was taken in March 2000 through a Regional Consultation to Prepare African Countries Towards Reduction of Reliance on DDT for Malaria Control, convened by WHO with UNEP support.

I. Hazardous wastes

38. UNEP continued to support and complement the activities of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposals. It provided substantive support to the development of the Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (adopted in Basel in December 1999). Since the problems of hazardous wastes are closely linked to the way in which products are generated and consumed, UNEP's activities in this field have increasingly become focused on the life cycle of the economy and the role and responsibility of the private sector, particularly industry, therein.

39. UNEP's activities in the promotion of cleaner production have contributed further to the minimization of hazardous wastes. Following the signing of the International Declaration on Cleaner Production by over 40 Governments and over 70 companies and business associations, during the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in April 1999, additional signing events took place in Bahrain, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Morocco, Tunisia, the United States of America and Viet Nam. The Declaration aims at encouraging new and additional finance and investment for preventive technology options and promoting cooperation in and transfers of environmentally sound technology. Its implementation is assisted by UNEP's global network of cleaner production partners in all parts of the world, including 16 National Cleaner Production Centres jointly sponsored by UNEP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). An additional five centres are planned for the Eastern European and African countries. With funding support from the Government of Norway, a project on promoting cleaner production investments, focusing on the role of development banks and private investors in funding cleaner production, is also being implemented. Regional round tables on cleaner production are being planned for Africa and the Mediterranean region. A worldwide review on progress in the implementation of cleaner production will take pace at the sixth high-level seminar, to be held in Montreal, in October 2000.

III. Cross-sectoral issues

A. Social and economic dimensions

40. Concerning the social and economic dimensions covered by section I of Agenda 21, UNEP contributes to the implementation of relevant actions identified in the chapters under this section as they relate to the environment.

1. Economics, trade and environment

41. Regarding the issues under chapter 2 entitled "International cooperation to accelerate sustainable development in developing countries and related domestic policies", UNEP, building on its strength in the field of the environment, contributes to actions directed towards making trade and the environment mutually supportive.

42. As outlined earlier in the present report, UNEP is working to improve countries' understanding of the interlinkages and complementarities between trade, environment and development through research, country studies and consensus-building activities. These include: research on major issues in the trade-environment domain, with emphasis on developing practical and solution-oriented approaches to assess and manage the environmental impacts of trade; and UNEP country studies, particularly for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to enhance their capacities to assess the environmental impacts of trade liberalization and to develop policy

response measures to correct negative impacts while strengthening positive ones.

43. Over the past two years, UNEP has worked with national institutions and Governments in Bangladesh, Chile, India, the Philippines, Romania and Uganda on country studies covering various economic sectors and on consensus-building activities that bring experts and decision makers together in an informal and unofficial dialogue, aimed at identifying options to carry forward the trade-environment agenda. Recent international expert workshops have focused on multilateral environmental agreements and multilateral trade agreements, on subsidies and the environment, as well as on the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs)[b] and the environment. Numerous briefings and seminars are used to disseminate the results of the workshops, research and country studies.

44. In response to the increasing need for capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in February 2000, UNEP and UNCTAD jointly launched a Capacity-building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development. The Task Force combines the unique strengths of UNEP to build capacities on the environmental aspects of trade, and those of UNCTAD to build capacities on the developmental aspects of trade. By enhancing synergies between UNEP and UNCTAD, and drawing on the two organizations' technical expertise and comparative advantages, it will make resources available to a wider range of beneficiaries. Through research, training and country studies, the Task Force will seek to enhance countries' appreciation of the developmental benefits that accrue when environmental considerations are integrated into national economic and trade policies. Through research and policy dialogue, it will also aim to raise countries' awareness of the need to ensure that international environmental and trade policy regimes remain mutually supportive and consistent.

45. Furthermore, UNEP participates in and contributes to meetings and regional training seminars of the World Trade Organization Committee on Trade and Environment. At the same time, the World Trade Organization actively participates in UNEP meetings on trade-related topics. This collaboration has fostered enhanced dialogue between stakeholders, particularly on the issue of establishing greater coherence between the multilateral environmental agreements and the World Trade Organization. In November 1999, following extensive consultations between UNEP, the World Trade Organization and Governments, the two secretariats agreed on a collaborative framework to strengthen cooperation.

2. Changing consumption patterns

46. In order to systematically address the environmental dimensions of chapter 4 entitled "Changing consumption patterns", UNEP has incorporated into its programme of work a programme element of production and consumption. UNEP's sustainable consumption activities include: developing tools, such as marketing and advertising, life-cycle assessment and eco-design, which are being adapted to promote a sustainable consumption agenda and are made available via workshops and experts meetings, research reports and tool kits and guides. In 1998, three international workshops were held in San Francisco, United States (for developed and developing countries), in Tsukuba, Japan (with support from the Government of Japan, for Asia and the Pacific countries), and in Brussels (co-sponsored by the Government of the United States) to promote life-cycle assessment. Since 1999, the development of a sustainable consumption strategy for youth has been initiated in cooperation with the UNEP Youth Advisory Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development. With a view to fostering sustainable consumption, UNEP has been promoting an Initiative on Advertisement and Sustainable Development. In 1999, UNEP organized 21 meetings, seminars and conferences related to production and consumption patterns in fields such as sustainable agri-food production, mining and environmental management of industrial estates.

47. Moreover, UNEP has developed a pilot Sustainable Energy Advisory Facility that will provide a variety of targeted advisory services related to sustainable energy in 10 developing countries. The facility will assist decision makers in overcoming specific problems regarding sustainable energy policies, projects, investments, technologies and financing. African countries represent the priority target group of the Facility. With support from the United Nations Foundation, UNEP has also started a programme to help establish small private-sector energy companies in Africa that are based on renewable energy technologies. The Africa Rural

Energy Enterprise Development initiative brings together various financial institutions and non-governmental organizations (both African and Western) to promote successful approaches to business start-ups.

3. Integrating environment and development in decision-making

48. Integrating environment and development in decision-making, the subject of chapter 8, is a critical component of UNEP programmes and is incorporated into its activities in the form of, for example, global and regional policy development forums and technical and legal advisory services to develop national policies, regulatory frameworks and institutions.

49. UNEP continued to provide legal advisory services to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in developing national environmental legislation and institutions. In 1999, UNEP provided such assistance to 13 countries (Cameroon, El Salvador, Ghana, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nepal, the Niger, Peru, Rwanda and Sri Lanka). UNEP also provided assistance to Armenia, Belarus and the Russian Federation in the harmonization of environmental laws with a view to developing a holistic legal system in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). To increase the role of the judiciary in environmental matters and sustainable development, UNEP organized a regional symposium entitled "Southeast Asian Justices Symposium: The Law on Sustainable Development", in Manila in March 1999; and for the Latin America and the Caribbean region, it organized a symposium in Mexico City in January 2000 entitled "Judicial Symposium on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development: Access to Environmental Justice in Latin America".

50. In order to assist Governments in building the expertise of their officials to support a regulatory system in environmental matters, UNEP convened the fourth Global Training Programme on Environmental Law and Policy in Nairobi for a period of three weeks in November and December 1999. Government officials and experts from 47 countries around the world were provided with environmental-law-related information and opportunities for enhancing their skills in environmental law. To make legal information widely accessible, UNEP, together with the World Conservation Union (IUCN), further developed the joint UNEP/IUCN Environmental Law Information Service, consisting in a comprehensive, global database on environmental law information, which will ensure better access to such information, particularly by developing countries.

51. UNEP continued its assistance to African countries in enhancing their national environmental legislation and related institutions under the UNEP/UNDP/Dutch Joint Project on Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa. Since May 1999, seven training workshops have been held with a total of more than 200 participants, including government officials and non-governmental organizations and the private sector, on the subject of: environmental impact assessment (in Kenya and Sao Tome and Principe); environmental litigation and judicial intervention in environmental cases (in Malawi); colloquiums for parliamentarians on environmental legislation (in Burkina Faso and Kenya); and implementation of conventions related to biological diversity in Africa (two workshops).

52. UNEP has been active in supporting African countries in the formulation of environmental policies and policy instruments. The support has been provided to regional and subregional cooperative machinery, as well as to Governments through legal and technical advisory services and technical assistance in various programme areas. In order to meet the needs of Africa effectively, UNEP is finalizing a comprehensive strategy document, "Joining hands", which contains innovative, concrete and realistic action proposals for dealing with the complex and emerging environmental concerns of Africa.

53. UNEP convened the eighth session of AMCEN, which was held in Abuja, from 3 to 6 April 2000. African Governments reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen this important regional cooperation mechanism to meet the environmental management challenges of the twenty-first century.

54. In addition, the UNEP/UNDP/Dutch Joint Project has continued the production and distribution of materials on environmental policy and law, which included a two-volume compendium of judicial decisions on matters related to the environment. The memorandum of understanding on the environment, which was adopted under the project in October 1998, was amply reflected in the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community signed by Heads of State on 30 November 1999. The work under this

project enhanced the capacity of East African countries by providing a well-conceived body of recommendations and soft-law instruments, which will strengthen future environmental management in the region.

55. Overall, UNEP has strengthened its presence in the regions in order to ensure effective government participation in the work of UNEP, and to ensure that regional concerns, priorities and perspectives are fully taken into account in the development of UNEP policies, programme planning and implementation. UNEP has reviewed and regularly analysed the status of environmental problems in the regions and assisted in the formulation of response strategies. Governments and other concerned parties in the regions have been provided with information on the state of the global environment and global environmental issues. Advisory services and technical assistance have been provided to Governments upon request. UNEP has promoted activities to disseminate new concepts and approaches for dealing with specific environmental problems in and between the regions. Furthermore, UNEP has been providing forums and mechanisms for intergovernmental dialogue on environmental issues, and supporting subregional and regional cooperation programmes on the environment, such as regional and subregional environmental frameworks and regional forums for policy dialogue and coordination. For example, experience gained in supporting the Forum of Ministers of the Environment in Latin America and the Inter-agency Technical Committees serves as a model for establishing regional forums in other regions. Similarly, in Asia and the Pacific, experience gained with regional assessment centres serves to assist the replication of such centres elsewhere.

B. Strengthening the role of major groups

56. UNEP has been actively involving major groups as partners in implementing its activities, thereby contributing to the implementation of section III of Agenda 21 entitled "Strengthening the role of major groups". Non-governmental organizations (chapter 27) have been UNEP's partners in carrying out a broad range of environmental actions, and have participated in national, regional and global policy forums organized by UNEP. The recent establishment of a UNEP office for civil society and non-governmental organizations demonstrates UNEP's commitment to strengthening such constructive partnership. UNEP also addresses the role of indigenous people and their community as they relate to UNEP activities in the field of the environment, such as those on biological diversity.

57. As outlined in the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, the role, capabilities and involvement of civil society organizations have undergone a substantial increase over recent years, which highlights the need for national Governments, UNEP and other international organizations to enhance the engagement of these organizations in their work on environmental matters. Civil society plays an important role in bringing emerging environmental issues to the attention of policy makers, raising public awareness, promoting innovative ideas and approaches, and promoting transparency as well as non-corrupt activities in environmental decision-making. With the growing globalization in communication, there is a need for independent and objective media at all levels in enhancing awareness and developing shared environmental values in global society. The media can serve the cause of sustainable development by identifying emerging issues, raising awareness and promoting appropriate action. UNEP will intensify its partnership with civil society organizations, including the media, in pursuit of the objectives of Agenda 21.

58. To ensure enhanced collaboration with non-governmental organizations, UNEP sponsored a meeting with African non-governmental organizations in Nairobi, in September 1999, with a view to strengthening collaborative links between non-governmental organizations. Thirty-five delegates representing various non-governmental organizations from 20 African countries attended the meeting. The meeting adopted a declaration on the role of non-governmental organizations in the twenty-first century which was an input to the Seoul Conference of non-governmental organizations. In October 1999, UNEP actively participated in the Seoul Conference, which was attended by over 1,000 non-governmental organizations. UNEP sponsored the attendance of a number of African non-governmental organizations at the Seoul event. Building upon the declaration adopted in Nairobi, the Seoul Conference adopted the Seoul Millennium Declaration, which addresses Governments, the United Nations and the international community and outlines the commitment of non-governmental organizations. The outcome of the

Conference represented an important landmark prior to the Millennium Forum of non-governmental organizations held in May 2000.

59. UNEP cooperated with the International Olympic Committee at the Third World Conference on Sport and Environment held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 1999, where an Agenda 21 for the Olympic Movement was discussed. The Agenda 21 will be launched during the 2000 Olympic Games, in Sydney, Australia.

60. In the field of industry and environment (chap. 30), UNEP has been working with industry and business associations to promote cleaner production, guidance on industrial pollution management and voluntary environmental initiatives. These initiatives include:

(a) The Financial Institutions Initiative;

(b) The Insurance Industry Initiative;

(c) The Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development;

(d) A Telecommunications Initiative;

(e) The Global Reporting Initiative;

(f) The Global Compact Initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General, to which UNEP actively contributes;

(g) The Protection of the Ozone Layer Voluntary Pledge.

Representatives of workers and trade unions are also invited to policy-development forums, and capacity-building workshops organized by UNEP to address relevant environmental issues.

61. Through its youth and children programme, UNEP has been promoting environmental awareness among young people (chap. 25). Such activities include the development of environmental information and materials for young people and awareness-raising campaigns and conferences for children. In recognition of the role of women in environmental protection and sustainable development, UNEP's activities and its projects are designed to give due consideration to gender aspects (chap. 24).

62. UNEP also continues to network with the scientific and technical communities with a view to enhancing the quality of environmental assessment and information and effective environmental management (chap. 31). In order to foster the involvement of local authorities in environmental governance, UNEP has been collaborating with other partner organizations, such as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), in the promotion of good environmental practices and the dissemination of related knowledge (chap. 28).

C. Means of implementation

63. With regard to means of implementation of Agenda 21 which come under its section IV, UNEP's programmes are designed to integrate those means fully into activities as they relate to its mandate.

1. Financial resources and mechanisms: the Global Environment Facility

64. Concerning financial resources and mechanisms (chap. 33), UNEP has made its environmental expertise available to multilateral financial institutions, in particular with respect to capacity-building activities. As an implementing agency of GEF, UNEP contributes to the implementation of chapter 33. To ensure complementarity between GEF activities and those of the implementing agencies, an action plan was endorsed at the thirteenth meeting of the GEF Council, held in Washington, D.C., in May 1999, consisting in a strategic approach to the integration of global environmental issues into the regular programmes of the GEF implementing agencies. To ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to the implementation of the action plan, in June 1999 UNEP established the UNEP/GEF Programme Coordination Committee, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director. In October 1999 the Committee considered certain activities for inclusion in UNEP's programme of work for 2000-2001. These activities range from assessment, ozone-layer protection, biological diversity, biosafety, land degradation, international waters, persistent toxic substances and cross-cutting issues. In addition, the UNEP/GEF Strategic Partnership was developed and adopted by the GEF Council in December 1999. Under the framework of the Strategic Partnership, initial activities worth $1.3 million in fiscal year 2000 were approved, including strategic activities such as the establishment of a clearing house for technology and know-how transfer and an interactive forum on global environmental issues.

65. In keeping with the framework of the action plan, from January 1999 to March 2000 UNEP/GEF promoted a work programme comprising:

(a) Five full-scale projects costing $50.7 million, including $29.12 million in GEF financing;

(b) Ten medium-sized projects costing $7 million;

(c) Fourteen Project Development Fund category B projects costing $5.15 million;

(d) Thirteen Project Development Fund category A projects costing $0.32 million;

(e) One climate change enabling activity costing $0.175 million.

2. Environmentally sound technologies

66. UNEP, through its International Environmental Technology Centre, systematically disseminates information and knowledge relating to such technology and promotes its use (chap. 34). The Centre, located in Osaka and Shiga, continues to promote the use of environmentally sound technologies to address urban and freshwater management issues. To this end, the environmentally sound technologies information exchange database "MaESTro" is being supplemented with a number of water management technologies. In addition, an international symposium was organized on efficient water use in cities, technology options for rain-water harvesting, water recycling, and leakage control and water efficiency. A number of technical documents were published, for example, on management of lakes and reservoirs, trenchless technologies, freshwater augmentation, stormwater management and waste-water treatment. Currently a citizens' programme is being developed together with non-governmental organizations and local authorities, using Lake Biwa in Japan as a case study.

67. UNEP develops and operates various clearing-house mechanisms for information exchange concerning technology transfer and industry. These mechanisms include the OzonAction Information Clearing House; the International Cleaner Production Information Clearing House; and MaESTro, which seeks to meet priority needs reflected in environmental conventions and identified by Governments, particularly in the least developed countries of Africa and the small island developing States.

3. National environmental mechanisms and international cooperation

68. UNEP has been helping developing countries to develop their national environmental mechanisms and, in that regard, has been coordinating international cooperation, for example in the development of national environmental legislation and institutions (chap. 37). UNEP, in cooperation with donor Governments and partner organizations, undertakes numerous capacity-building activities designed to catalyse actions in the field of the environment. Those activities encompass areas such as environmental assessment, environmental management and technology, policy development, development of national environmental legislation and institutions and promotion of the implementation of environmental conventions.

4. International legal instruments

69. UNEP continues to lead the development of international legal instruments and related mechanisms in the field of the environment (chap. 38). UNEP activities in this field have been guided by its long-term strategic programme, the Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme). As outlined in the main body of the present report, during the second half of 1999, UNEP initiated a process for the preparation of a new strategic programme for the development and periodic review of environmental law for the first decade of the twenty-first century (Montevideo Programme III).

70. Recent achievements and contributions in the development of international legal instruments include:

(a) Adoption of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;

(b) Further progress in the development of a global legally binding instrument on persistent organic pollutants;

(c) Provision of legal assistance to the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the development of a regional legal framework on transboundary air pollution, especially from haze and forest fires;

(d) Provision of legal support for the development and initiation of the Caspian Environment Programme, particularly through fostering the negotiation of the Caspian Sea convention;

(e) Support to the Conference of the Parties to, and the secretariat of, the Basel Convention for the adoption of the Protocol on Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes;

(f) Support to the Conference of the Parties to, and the secretariat of, the Convention on Biological Diversity for the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

(g) Support for the further development of regional seas conventions and protocols and related action plans.

71. In the context of the Montevideo Programme and with regard to dispute avoidance and dispute settlements, UNEP prepared a study on the subject with the assistance of a group of legal experts. The study on "Dispute Avoidance and Dispute Settlement in International Environmental Law" was presented to the Governing Council at its twentieth session, which took note of it with appreciation.

5. Interlinkages and coordination among conventions

72. As outlined in the main body of the report, UNEP, in collaboration with various convention secretariats, has been providing support for the implementation of the existing global and regional environmental agreements and the development of new protocols under these conventions. Many of the secretariats of multilateral environmental conventions are provided by UNEP, and their activities have been closely linked to the programme activities of UNEP. With the growing number of conventions and protocols in the field of the environment, UNEP has placed its focus on interlinkages and synergies among the issues addressed by various conventions, and initiated actions aiming at enhancing coherence and synergy among the regimes under such conventions.

73. The first interlinkages report, *Protecting Our Planet — Securing Our Future: Links among Global Environmental Issues and Human Needs*, prepared in partnership with the World Bank, WHO and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States, was published in June 1999 with a view to bringing to the world's attention the links between global environmental issues and human needs. In October 1999, UNEP organized a meeting for the "Reconstitution of the Interlinkages Experts Group" in Bonn, which was attended by representatives of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol. At the meeting, participants discussed how to follow up on the first interlinkages report, and concluded that the second interlinkages assessment could be carried out as a component of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

74. In order to identify the direction that UNEP should take in promoting synergies in the scientific and technical work of environmental conventions, UNEP organized the First Consultative Meeting of the Subsidiary Scientific and Technical Bodies and Secretariats of Environmental Conventions, in Bonn in October 1999. The meeting, attended by representatives of global and regional multilateral environmental conventions, identified potential areas for collaboration among those conventions on topics such as assessment, trade and streamlining of national reporting.

6. Compliance and enforcement

75. With a view to promoting the effectiveness of the existing international environmental treaties, UNEP has initiated activities in the area of enforcement of and compliance with such treaties. UNEP convened a workshop on Enforcement of and Compliance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in Geneva in July 1999, with the support of Canada, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The workshop was attended by 49 experts from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, drawn from the sectors of law enforcement, customs, prosecution and police sectors. It focused on the Basel Convention, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the ozone treaties (the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol). Representatives of convention secretariats, the

International Criminal Police Organization — Interpol and the World Customs Organization participated as resource persons and facilitators in three working groups established to discuss specific illegal trade and traffic issues pertaining to each of the three conventions. A two-volume publication reflecting the outcome will be disseminated shortly. Following upon the meeting, a senior officer was appointed and an enforcement unit was established within UNEP to address enforcement issues. In addition, draft guidelines for cooperation at the national, regional and global levels were prepared and reviewed by a first working group meeting of experts, held in Geneva in December 1999. Both the report of the meeting and the draft guidelines have been the subject of comments from Governments and are being analysed for a further review later in 2000.

Notes

[a] *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

[b] See *Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994* (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).